

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-15, 17-26, 28-30, 41-44 and 46 are pending in the application. Claims 5, 16, 27 and 45-40 are cancelled. Applicant hereby requests further examination and reconsideration of the application, in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Objections

The Patent Office objected to claim 2 due to informalities. Claim 2 has been amended as suggested. Applicant notes the renumbering of claims 46 and 47 to 45 and 46.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §§ 102, 103 and Allowable Subject Matter

The Patent Office rejected claims 1-4, 11-15, 22-26, and 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Gutheridge et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,393,557. The Patent Office also rejected claims 41-44 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gutheridge et al. in view of Iwamura, U.S. Patent No. 5,883,621.

Applicant wishes to seek expeditious issuance of a patent containing claims directed to subject matter found allowable by the Patent Office. Thus, Applicant has rewritten claims 1, 12, 23 and 41 to present allowable claims 5, 16, 27 and 45, respectfully, in independent form as suggested. Accordingly, it is believed that the remaining claims 1-4, 6-15, 17-26, 28-30, 41-44 and 46 are patentable and allowance of these claims is requested. However, Applicant does not acquiesce to the rejections of claims 1-4, 11-15, 22-26, 30 and 41-44 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102, 103, and reserves the right to present claims drawn to the same or similar subject matter for consideration in a continuing application. Additionally, Applicant reserves the right to withdraw the present amendment and traverse the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102, 103 should the Patent Office assert new grounds for rejection of the claims presently indicated as being allowable.

CONCLUSION

The application is respectfully submitted to be in condition for allowance of all claims. Accordingly, notification to that effect is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,
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